



Exercise and home safety improvements can help prevent falls

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) released a new report showing that while falls are the leading cause of injury-related death and hospitalization for older Utahns, falling does not have to be a normal part of aging.

"Older adults want to stay active, independent, and safe in their homes, but many worry about their risk of falling," said Sheryl Gardner, falls prevention specialist with the UDOH. "In fact, one-third of Utahns aged 65 and older will fall at least once this year. But falling is not a normal part of aging and older adults have the power to prevent a fall."

Every week, 200 Utahns aged 65 years and older fall and are treated in an emergency department for their injuries. Of these,

63 will require hospitalization and three individuals will die from their injuries. Additional data from the report showed in 2016, Utahns aged 65 and older accounted for 77.8 percent of all fall-related deaths in the state.

"Our goal is to help seniors remain healthy and independent. One fall can be the beginning of a downward health spiral that may include limited mobility, dementia from a head injury, and complications from major surgeries like blood clots and seizures. Even minor falls can impact a person's sense of safety and well-being," said Gardner.

Most falls can be prevented by removing hazards from the home and participating in regular strength and balance exercises.

The UDOH recommends six basic steps to reduce the risk of falling:

Begin a regular exercise program. Exercise improves strength and balance, as well as coordination which is vital to helping you stay on your feet. Davis County Health Department's Senior Services offers free or low-cost exercise and falls prevention classes. To find upcoming classes in Davis County, visit livingwell.utah.gov or call Priscilla Angulo at 801-525-5087.

Talk to your healthcare provider. Ask your healthcare provider if you are at risk of falling. Also, it's important to tell your healthcare provider if you

see **FALLS** | 13

EnhanceFitness® classes keep seniors moving

by Priscilla **ANGULO**
DCHD Senior Services

EnhanceFitness® is a national, evidence-based physical activity program geared towards keeping seniors moving. The program focuses on improving heart health, muscle strength, flexibility, and balance. EnhanceFitness is taught by a certified fitness instructor to ensure quality and safety.

Research has proven that physical activity reduces the risks of dying prematurely from heart disease, and of developing diabetes and colon cancer. It can help reduce high blood pressure for those who already have it, relieve feelings of depression and anxiety, help control weight, help build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints. It also can help older adults become stronger, more balanced, supple, and more able to

move without falling.

Group participation and social interaction are often cited by participants as an important part of EnhanceFitness. Many participants have been attending classes for years and will call another participant who stops coming to encourage them to return or bring new friends.

The class meets 8-9 a.m. every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at Golden Years Senior Activity Center (726 S. 100 E., Bountiful). Participants are encouraged to attend as often as they can. Participant information and a fitness check will be completed when you begin the program and every four months for you to track your strengths and challenges. A contribution of \$2 per class or \$15 a month is suggested. For more information, call 801-525-5087.

Events in February

Central Davis Senior Activity Center

81 East Center Street, Kaysville (801-444-2290)

- 1 - Lunch at Maddox & trip to Hardware Ranch 11 a.m. (sign-up required)
- 5 - Tai Chi 9:30 a.m.
 - Chinese New Year party 11 a.m.
 - Square dancing 12:30 p.m.
- 6 - Book Club: The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd 1 p.m.
- 7 - Visit With Kristy Cottrell 10 a.m.
- 12 - Lapidary 8:30 a.m.
 - Utah Council of the Blind presentation 11:30 a.m.
- 14 - Food pantry noon
 - Marvelous Makers craft class 12:30 p.m.
- 18 - Closed for Presidents' Day
- 20 - Stepping On Fall Prevention class (sign-up required)
- 22 - Birthday lunch 11:30 a.m.

Golden Years Senior Activity Center

726 South 100 East, Bountiful (801-451-3660)

- M/W/F - EnhanceFitness 8 a.m.
- W - Tax preparation (by appointment 801-292-1389)
- 1 - Tai Chi 9:30 a.m.
- 7 - Sing-a-Long 10:30 a.m.
- 12 - AARP Safe Driving (sign-up required)
- 11 - Bingo 12:30 p.m.
- 16 - Golden Years Jazz Band 10:30 a.m.
- 18 - Closed for Presidents' Day
- 22 - Birthday party 11 a.m.
- 26 - Book Club 12:30 p.m.

North Davis Senior Activity Center

42 South State Street, Clearfield (801-525-5080)

- M/W/F - Bingo 12:30 p.m.
 - Texas Hold 'Em Poker noon
- M/Th - Tax preparation (by appointment)
- T/Th - Tai Chi for Arthritis & Fall Prevention 10:15 a.m.
- 1 - Trip to Rusted Spoon and Hardware Ranch (sign-up required)
- 4 - Lighten Hospice presentation at 11 a.m.
- 5 - Meet with Kristy 10 a.m.
 - Foot clinic (by appointment)
 - Shopping at Walmart at 12:30 p.m.
- 11 - Book club at 10:15 a.m.
- 12/26 - Blood pressure clinic at 10:30 a.m.
- 13 - Medicare presentation at 11:15 a.m.
- 13/27 - Food bank
 - Cards for a Cause at 10 a.m.
- 18 - Closed for Presidents' Day
- 19 - Shopping at Walmart 12:30 p.m.
 - AARP Smart Driving Class (sign-up required)
- 20 - Humana presentation 10:45 a.m.

See more at daviscountyutah.gov/seniors

FALLS

Continued from page 12

have fallen before.

Review medications with your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Some medicines or combinations of medicines may make you sleepy or dizzy increasing your risk of falling.

Check your vision and hearing annually. Ask your doctor to check your eyesight and hearing. Poor vision and hearing can increase your chance of falling.

Make your home safer. Remove tripping hazards like throw rugs and clutter in walkways as well as books and papers from stairs. Install grab bars next to your toilet and shower.

Make sure you have adequate lighting in hallways and bedrooms.

Talk to your family members and ask for their help. A fall affects more than yourself. Family members can help you stay safe if they know what to watch for and how to help.

For a copy of the report and how to prevent older adult falls, visit www.health.utah.gov/vipp/older-adults/falls.

Davis County Senior Services is offering the next Stepping On falls prevention workshop series on Wednesdays from Feb. 20 to April 3, noon-2 p.m., at Central Davis Senior Activity Center. Register online at www.livingwell.utah.gov or call 801-525-5087.

Community survey underway for adults age 55+

by Kristy **COTTRELL**
DCHD Senior Services
Director

The Davis County Health Department, along with Davis County Senior Services, is conducting a community survey that will help them better understand the needs and concerns of caregivers and adults age 55 and older within the county.

This survey will provide department staff with information allowing them to improve their services. Also, information contained in the survey will help caregivers and older adults find the community resources they may need for healthy aging in Davis County.

Medicare 101 classes offered

Davis County Health Department's Senior Services offers a free one hour class about Medicare options, enrollment, and benefits.

If you are turning 65 or preparing to retire, please join us for one of the following classes:

- Wednesday, Feb. 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m. – Clearfield Library (562 S. 1000 E., Clearfield)
- Wednesday, March 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m. – Centerville Library (45 S. 400 W., Centerville)

For more information about the Medicare 101 classes, contact Jackie Smith at 801-525-5082 or jmsmith@daviscountyutah.gov.



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